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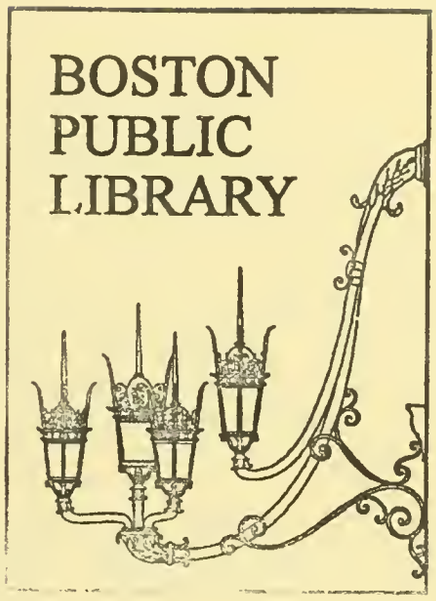

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City of Boston / Kevin H. White, Mayor

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MAYOR WHITE HAILS NEW ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS, CITY GOVERNMENT; PARTNERSHIP'S GOAL IS TO REVITALIZE LOWER WASHINGTON STREET

Mayor Kevin H. White today welcomed a new alliance established between the Boston business community and city government to implement an investment and development strategy that will make lower Washington Street "the cultural and economic linchpin of downtown Boston."

The Mayor's comments came in conjunction with the release of a report, "Center City: Goals & Guidelines for Revitalization," which was prepared by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce's Center City Task Force. The Task Force is made up of representatives of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Chamber, the Chinese community, and retail, commercial, medical, cultural, theatre, real estate, development, and financial interests.

"From Lafayette Place on the north to the Theatre District in Park Square on the south, this area will soon become what it was always meant to be--the cultural and economic linchpin of Boston," Mayor White said. "It will provide a vital link between the Back Bay and the Financial District, and will reflect in steel and stone the diversity that has always been this city's greatest strength."

As the report noted, more than $350 million in capital investment already is planned or underway in the Center City area.

Commenting on the Center City report, the Mayor said, "This whole report, like the future it sketches, is the work of visionaries--men who see potential for economic and cultural progress where others see only profits, men who envision a creative partnership between the public and private sectors."

The report lists five major development goals:

* Promote increased capital investment in the area.

* Maintain and increase the number and diversity of job opportunities.

George K. Regan, Jr., Director • Mayor's Office of Communications • Boston City Hall • Rm 716 • Boston, Massachusetts 02201 • (617) 725-3350

* Encourage an enlarged residential base through the creation of all levels of additional housing.

* Promote the area as the city's major retail core, a major medical center, and New England's primary cultural center.

* Upgrade and maintain the public environment.

Chamber Chairman Kenneth Rossano noted that the report represents almost a year-and-a-half of discussions by the Center City Task Force members.

"We are calling the area 'Center City'," Rossano said, "because it is a vital link between the Government Center/Faneuil Hall and Copley Square/Prudential areas of the City and has within it all the diverse--and uniquely Boston--uses and activities to be found in the City as a whole.

"The Task Force report marks only the beginning of a unique collaboration between the public sector, private sector and the community to encourage growth and development in the area," Rossano continued. "In the report, all parties have come together to set out a joint vision of how continued growth and change can best meet the needs of the City as a whole, and the Center City area in particular."

He concluded: "Only through such a partnership can the potential of the Center City area be realized."

Robert J. Ryan, deputy mayor for development and director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, said that the alliance and the report serve as starting points of another vital phase of Boston's continuing development boom.

"There are a wide range of issues, and diverse constituencies, to address in our planning work for lower Washington Street, but I would like very briefly to focus on one area--what we call Parcel 31--and to explain some of our present thinking," Ryan said. "Let me emphasize that what we're discussing is a concept...there is nothing here that's set in stone."

Ryan then elaborated by outlining some specific possibilities of what Parcel 31, bounded by Tremont, Boylston, Stuart and Washington Streets, could become.

The report, in commenting on today's economic climate, stated in its introduction: "Since the days of massive urban renewal projects are over, and federal and local resources are diminishing, revitalization of Center City will depend upon the strong partnership between the City, Boston's business community and community groups and associations."

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